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The Nature of Consciousness

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THE NATURE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

BY

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A. B. University of Illinois,
1912.

THESIS

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
IN PHILOSOPHY

IN

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

OF THE

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

1913

1913
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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

June 7 1913

I HEREBY RECOMMEND THAT THE THESIS PREPARED UNDER MY SUPERVISION BY

Clyde Monroe Hobart

ENTITLED The Nature of Consciousness

BE ACCEPTED AS FULFILLING THIS PART OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF Master of Arts

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247391

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I.

INTRODUCTION.

The theme of this paper is an old one. Like most other philosophical topics, it is noted for the great amount of disagreement, that clusters around it. Although at all periods in the history of philosophy, there has been lack of agreement upon the topic to be discussed, still the present age stands out as one which presents more different theories of consciousness, than any of the previous ages.

Now my purpose is not to add another theory of consciousness to the present manifold, but rather to select one from the manifold, and develop it briefly, in order to see more clearly, its precise view-point. Like many theories, especially those of late origin, this one has never been really formulated, but has been merely hinted at, and at the most, a few references made to it. Nevertheless by reading such men as Dewey, and Woodbridge, one can detect that this theory forms a strong undercurrent, for much of their writing. The theory under consideration is present in such articles as Dewey's, Perception and Organic Action, and Woodbridge's, The Nature of consciousness. The theory has been designated by some as the "relational theory of consciousness." Stated in this broad manner, however, does not mark it off sharply enough. For instance, Professor Perry's theory of consciousness although much different from that of Professor Dewey's, might

well be termed, a relational one. It may be that the following statement would best describe our point of view: a pragmatic relational theory of consciousness.

It seems to the writer that the most typical point concerning the pragmatic relational one, has been in its procedure, and in the manner in which it has regarded consciousness. The term 'naturalistic' brings out the thought I wish to convey. Consciousness is considered an observable fact and for that reason, has been treated in an observable way, that is, the naturalistic method has been applied to it, not only in regard to its explanation, but also in regard to its definition. This theory is in direct opposition to such statements as the following, which have appeared many times in psychologies and philosophies. The two following quotations illustrate the point:

> Colvin[1] says "it is hardly to be expected that a completely satisfactory definition of consciousness will ever be framed. Consciousness is the most fundamental and final fact of the Universe. It is therefore impossible to give a definition of consciousness in terms, more elementary than consciousness itself."
>
> Angell[2] writes "Mental facts, or facts of consciousness, constitute the field of psychology.
>
> "Consciousness, we can only define in terms of itself. Sensations, ideas, pains, pleasures, acts

[1] Colvin, Learning Process, I., p. 3.
[2] Angell, Psychology, I., p. 1-2.

of memory, imagination, and will -- these amy serve to illustrate, the experiences we mean to indicate, by the term; and our best endeavor to construct a successful definition, results in such some list of which we can only say, these taken together are what I mean by consciousness. A psychological treatise is really an attempts to furnish the essentials for such a catalogue.

"It is generally maintained that that despite our difficulty in framing a satisfactory definition of consciousness, we can at least detect one or two of its radical differences, from the physical objects which make up the rest of our cosmos. These latter always possess position and extension, i.e., they occupy space. Psychical facts, or events, never do; on the other hand, they possess one charactertistic, which so far as we know, is wholly wanting to physical facts, in that they exist for themselves. A man, not only has sensations and ideas, he knows he has them. A stone, or other physical object has no such knowledge of its own existence, or of its own experiences. Yet whatever they may be the values of these distinctions, we need entertain no real fear of encountering any serious misapprehension of the inner nature of consciousness, for each one of us experiences it every day, for himself, and each is thus fitted to discuss it with some measure of accuracy."

Our problem will be grouped under three heads: first, does the body change in a typical way, when consciousness arises; second, does the object change in a typical way when consciousness arises; third, do the body and object change correlatively in a typical way when consciousness arises.

II.

DOES THE BODY CHANGE IN A TYPICAL WAY, WHEN CONSCIOUSNESS ARISES?

The question arises whether there is a typical bodily change when consciousness occurs. This means whether one can detect the arrival of consciousness by examining the body. The facts of ordinary life prove that one can detect the arrival of consciousness by an examination of the body alone. We are making the distinction at all times between conscious and unconscious bodily behavior. All objects are divided into two clases: those that never possess consciousness, and those that do possess it at certain consciousness. Stated from the standpoint of the body, this serves that all objects are divided into two clases: those that never possess conscious behavior, and those that do possess conscious behavior at certain times. Although the distinction between conscious and non-conscious behavior is used by every one, still a statement of the difference between the two kinds of behavior is another matter.

We must remember, however, that even if conscious and non-conscious behavior are oftentimes easily stepped over against each other, still the gap between the two, is not at all times so wide. The gap between the two becomes so narrow, that is often impossible to detect the gap at

all. We must not simplify the facts so much as actually to change them, but rather attempt a clear account of this complex affair. The position is simply this: in the first place, an observer is still necessary to make the distinction between consciousness and non-consciousness behavior. In a great many cases, to be sure, it is difficult for any observer to say, whether the behavior is of the one type, or of the other. In some cases, it is impossible for any observer to decide whether a certain behavior is consciouss or non-conscious. This is merely another way of saying that what the character of conscious behavior is, has not yet been discovered, in full, and for that reason has never been stated.

Students of animal behavior have, however, discovered a few requisites for conscious behavior. In the first place certain bodily structures are necessary for an organism to be conscious. These are, a brain and a nervous system. In the second place, the body behaves differently in at least two respects, when consciousness is present. The first of these differences cannot be indicated very shortly but is usually designated vaguely by the term 'interestedly.' Calling conscious behavior one of interest, really means that conscious behavior can be distinguished from non-conscious behavior, without analyzing the different behaviors and seeing in just what respects they differ. The word 'interest' stands for this unanalyzed difference, and merely indicates that the difference is recognized, but is

yet undefined. The second difference, however, between conscious and non-conscious be havior, may be stated in definite form. In the case of conscious behavior, the time required for a reaction to a stimulus, is frequently longer, than is the case of non-conscious behavior.

One other fact may be mentioned in regard to consciousness in addition to the kind of bodily structures and the kind of bodily behavior necessary for its appearance. This other point is the kind of behavior going on in the body, just before the appearance of consciousness. A certain typical kind of behavior has been noticed, which preceeds the appearance of consciousness, but this behavior is as hard to describe as is conscious behavior. This state of the body, which always preceeds the appearance of consciousness, is usually termed, one of conflict, one in which the wires are crossed. It is described as one in which the body is stimulated to react in more than one way, which ways are incompatible with each other. It is sometimes for that reason, called a period of hesitation.

One other general point might be worthy of mention, in connection with bodily behavior. Regardless of the fact that the distinction between conscious and non-conscious behavior is often made, and made correctly, still there remain many cases in which the distinction cannot be made, or is made incorrectly. What do these cases of error mean? Do they mean that there is no difference between the two classes of behavior, or do they mean that not enough know-

ledge of the situation has been gathered to furnish a basis for making the distinction in the given case? An instance of error in connection with behavior, is the same in principle as error in any other case. The inability to identify conscious behavior as such is the same as the inability to identify a given person. Error in both cases is due to an insufficient knowledge of the situations. The remedy for the errors is the same, viz., more knowledge concerning the materials under investigation.

In order to have conscious bodily behavior, first a brain and nervous system must be present; second, stimuli evocking conflicting responses must present themselves; third, the body reacts in an interested way, which way requires more time for reaction than a non-interested form of response. We have also seen that the cause of error in regard to the identification of conscious behavior, is on a par with the cause of errors in any other field, and also that the remedy for error is the same in all fields.

In order to avoid confusion, it might be well to designate the kind of typical way in which the body does change upon the appearance of consciousness. There are two ways in which the organism might change. This division of kinds of change is based upon the procedure which would be necessary to detect the change for the first time. It might be that by mere examination of the body alone, one could say the body is changing in a certain peculiar manner. On the other hand it might be that this peculiar manner of

change could not be detected unless the environment was also considered along with the body. That is, the peculiarity of the change may consist in a form of adaptation, in a peculiar relationship between the body and its environment. Of course, after this change in the body has been detected by observing both the body and the environment, then by use of a criterion, which may be formed one now can detect the change in the body by an examination of the body along. It is this latter kind of typical change, one which requires the presence of the environment as well as the body, in order to detect the change in the body, which goes under the name of 'interest.' In the present state of knowledge the typical change here discussed is a change that must be stated in terms of a relationship or adaptation of body to environment. The conclusion we have reached then, in regard to our first point, is this: when consciousness arises, the body does change in a typical way, namely, its behavior becomes interested behavior.

III.

DOES THE OBJECT CHANGE IN A TYPICAL WAY WHEN CONSCIOUSNESS ARISES?

We have just reached the conclusion that there is a typical bodily change upon the arrival of consciousness, and we now face the question whether there is a typical objective change upon the appearance of consciousness. At first glance it is not at all apparent as it was in the case of a body, that the object changes characteristically when consciousness arises. The facts of ordinary life lead us to believe in such a change in the case of the body, but the facts of every-day life, do not seemingly lead us to believe this kind of change in the case of the object. Although it is far from evident upon first consideration that the object does change typically upon the appearance of consciousness, yet many theories have been advanced in regard to the manner in which objects change when they become conscious objects. We will consider at this point, four different views that hold to a typical change in the object when consciousne arises.

The first one we will consider, is similar to the view advanced by John Locke. Locke[1] writes "The ideas that make our complex ones of corporeal substances are of these three sorts. First, the ideas of the primary qualities of things, which are discovered by our senses,

[1] Locke, Essay Concerning Human Understanding, II., chap. 23, paragraph 9.

> and are in them even when we perceive them not: such are the bulk, figure, number, situation, and motion of the parts of bodies, which are really in them whether we take notice of them or no. Secondly, the sensible secondary qualities which depending upon these are nothing but the powers those substance have to produce several ideas in us, by oursenses, which ideas are not in the things themselves, otherwise than as anything is in its cause."

The statement of how objects change in connection with consciousness, is that they take on all secondary qualities. An object as we experience it, is divided up into two kinds of qualities: primary, and secondary. The primary qualities are shape, size, impenetrability, weight, mobility. The secondary qualities are all theother qualities, such as color, smell, taste, sound, etc. The difference between 'out of' and 'in' consciousness can be stated very briefly and clearly by advocates of this position. Object 'out of' experience consists of primary qualities. Object 'in' experience consists of primary qualities and secondary qualities. The change in the object from this point of view is amere addition of the secondary qualities to the object. The best merit of this theory has already been mentioned, namely, its simplicity and clearness of statement. Quite naturally one would like to know what reason there is for making the assertion that secondary qualities are added to the object when experienced.

In other words, is there any evidence for the contention of the addition of secondary qualities.

The main argument advanced in support of this position is that of relativity. It is through an application of the principle of relativity that we arrive at the division of qualities into primary and secondary. Suppose we examine an object. Its color, sound, smell, taste, and the rest of the secondary qualities, depend upon two things: the kind of body making the observation, and the position of the body with regard to the object. We find that a change in the body or in its position results in a change in the secondary qualities of the object. In other words we find that the existence of secondary qualities are dependent upon a body in a certain position. This line of evidence shows that secondary qualities are dependent upon a certain standpoint. It does not show that the secondary qualities are added to the object. In order to do this it is necessary to show that the object minus the secondary qualities are not dependent upon a standpoint. Merely showing that the secondary qualities are dependent upon a standpoint, does not prove that the addition of the secondary qualities is the difference that occurs in an object when it is perceived, unless it is also shown that the primary qualities are independent of a standpoint. Advocates of this theory have never shown that primary qualities possess this independence, and for th at reason have not made out their case. When we examine the primary qualities, we find that they in turn

are just as dependent upon a body in a position as were the secondary qualities.

We have just seen from the consideration of the theory of secondary qualities, that both primary and secondary qualities are dependent upon a standpoint. We are now lead to a second point of view, in regard to change in the object upon the appearance of consciousness, realizing that relativity applies to primary qualities as well as to secondary qualities, lead some to the formulation of a theory which says that all known qualities of the object appear upon the arrival of consciousness. That is, both primary and secondary qualities are created when consciousness arises. Karl Pearson[1] writes: "The

> reality of a thing depends upon the possibilty of it occurring in whole, or part as a group of immediate sense impressions.
>
> "Very much in the position of such a telephone clerk is the conscious ego of each one of us seated at the present brain terminals of the sensory nerves. Not a step nearer than those terminals can the ego get to the outer world, and what in and for themselves, are the subscribers to its nerve exchange, it has no means of ascertaining. Messages in the form of sense impressions come flowing in from that 'outside world' and these we analyze, classify, store up, and reason about. But of the nature of 'things in themselves', of what may exist at the other end of our system of

[1]Karl Pearson, Grammar of Science, chap. 2.

telephone wires, we know nothing at all. But the things in themselves, which the sense impressions symbolize, the reality, as the metaphysicians wished to call it, at the other end of the nerve, remains unknown, and is unknowable."

This theory states that all known qualities are due to consciousness. Accordingly what the object is like, out of consciousness, we do not know. In the case of the former theory, the addition of the secondary qualities, did not conceal the other qualities, which the object possessed out of consciousness. In this theory, however, the addition of all known qualities conceals the real character of the object, as it is out of consciousness.

The question at once forces itself upon us, what grounds have we in believing that there is an object out of consciousness, a thing in itself concerning which we know nothing. There are two ways in which we get at facts: one is through sense experience; the other by inference. It is admitted that we do not reach the thing in itself by sense experience. The only method of approach remaining, is that of inference. An inference is made concerning the nature of facts in order to explain certain problems which arise out of the facts. The purpose and justification of an inference is that of explanation. If an inference is made which does not explain, then we are bound by logical principles to withdraw the inference. Whether one is justified in assuming a thing in itself, then depends upon whether a thing in itself explains anything. Up to

date advocates of the thing in itself, have never indicated what this unknown 'x' explains. As has often been indicated, our whole experiential life would go along in just the same manner, whether a thing in itself existed, or not. In other words, the assumption is of no practical value, either as to every day living, or as to purposes of explanation. One other point might be worthy of mention in this connection. To say that a thing in itself exists and in the same breath to say that all known qualities of an object, depend upon a standpoint, is a point-blank contradiction. If all the known qualities of an object depend upon a standpoint, then the qualities of an object, called existence, depends upon a standpoint. How then, can we say a thing in itself exists? We cannot say so, without contradiction, anymore than we could say, the thing in itself is red. In the case of asserting that the thing in itself exists, what we do is to say, first, that existence is dependent upon the standpoint, and second, that existence is not dependent upon a standpoint.

The method used by both of the two previously discussed theories, which led in one case to the conclusion that consciousness created secondary qualities, and in the other case to the conclusion, that consciousness created all known qualities, was that of relativity. The critism of both theories, was that the principle of relativity was misapplied. Stated differently, neither theory made use of a thoroughgoing relativity. In both cases an absolute was brought into

the discussion, in the first theory, the primary qualities served as the absolute, in the second theory, an unknown 'x' was the absolute. The remedy for the difficulty that each theory led one into, by using relativity was more relativity. The lesson to be learned from such procedure, is that when we consider anything, we must remember that a standpoint is always involved.

A realization of this has lead to a third theory, which we will now consider.[1] This position says that consciousness created the object; in other words that an object exists only when in consciousness. Of course one cannot prove by direct experience that an object exists when unperceived, for the simple reason that an object cannot both be 'out of' and 'in' consciousness at the same time. However, objects do act in such a way as to lead one to believe in their continued existence. To illustrate, this kind of leading, , let us take a concrete case. Suppose I have a large ball, which I have placed in the air one hundred feet from the ground. By actual observation I find that it takes the time T for it to fall from this position to a position ten feet from the ground Now suppose that the ball is released, and I do not experience it in any way, my attention being diverted into other channels. But after the time T elapses, I look around and find the ball, just where it was on other occasions, when I had watched the ball in its falling, namely, ten feet from the ground. Generalizing from such a case, we get a statement of this character, that objects, if they do possess this

[1]See Hume, or John Stewart Mill.

'presto-chango' nature, act as if they do not. In one case we get an explainable connected world, in the other case, an unexplainable, disconnected world. We arrive at such a conclusion by the method of inference. We are justified in making the inference of a continued existence of object, whether perceived or unperceived, on the basis that such an assumption explains the world in the most satisfactory manner. This notion of'in' and 'out of' consciousness will be treated in the last chapter in the discussion of relativity, and for that reason, any criticism, that would apply here, in regard to 'in' and 'out of' consciousness will be omitted.

The fourth and last theory we shall discuss, is usually denoted by the terms 'awareness' or 'togetherness'. McGilvary[1] writes: "When anything is experienced it is in a unique kind of 'togetherness' with certain other things."

> "The analysis of experience if thoroughly carried out, will, I believe, always reveal in addition to the content of experience, another factor, namely, the unique togetherness of the content, which makes it into experiential content.
>
> "This last remark is, of course, an assertion of 'inner duplicity' of experience. Whatever upon analysis shows factors of different kind, is not simple, but complex. Experience is duplex in character, disclosiug upon analysis, two factors, phases, aspects, call them what you will; namely, contents and their peculiar mode of experiential integration. This latter factor is called

[1]McGilvary, Journal of Philosophy, 1909, p. 227, 231

by various names. It is 'experiencing','feeling', 'consciousness', and awareness. It may be true that neither the 'plain man', nor the philosopher defines these terms in this way, but I think that the fact which these terms designate, when divested of all that fancy has clothed this fact with, will be found to be just the fact of a unique 'togetherness' of things, which makes these things into experienced things."

This theory is similar to the first theory. The difference between the two is in the character of the distinction between primary and secondary qualities. According to this theory all qualities of the object are primary, except awareness, or togetherness, which is secondary. The difference between an object "out of" and "in" consciousness is just this awareness.

Two objections might be raised to this contention. In the first place in most of our experiences we never have awareness as constituted a part of the experienced object. In such an instance, there would be no difference at all, in the character of the object'out of' and 'in' consciousness. In the second place, when awareness is present, as a characteristic of the object, what ground have we for saying that awareness depends upon the organism and that the other qualities of the object are independent? As far as dependence is concerned, all the qualities of an object seem to be on the same plane. An object possesses awareness when no one is experiencing it in the same way as it possesses a color,

a size, or any other attribute. That is, from a certain standpoint an object possesses the quality awareness, just as from a certain standpoint it possesses the quality of color, or size. We cannot separate the awareness from the object unless we assume that it is possible to deal with object apart from the limitation of a specific standpoint.

We have just discussed briefly four theories which attempt to give an account of how an object changes upon the arrival of consciousness. We have found serious defects in their treatment, which makes their conclusions invalid. They have failed to prove than an object changes when consciousness arises. What conclusion, then, are we led to by these considerations? As against McGilvary, we maintain that objects can be considered only with reference to some standpoint. It is therefore illegitimate to treat objects as existing apart fromall standpoints, in order to raise the question, what it is that occurs when a specific standpoint comes into existence. If we are thus limited to standpoints, it is obviously impossible to ask what happens to the object when it becomes object for consciousness. To say that we are limited to standpoints, is to say that objects are conscious objects from the start. The region beyond experience is Fairyland, and with that region we have no concern. Our problem therefore narrows down to this question: Do objects change in a typical way concomitantly with the typical changes in the body previously discussed. To this question we now turn in the following chapter.

IV.

DO THE BODY AND OBJECT CHANGE CORRELATIVELY IN A TYPICAL WAY WHEN CONSCIOUSNESS ARISES?

Since we have arrived at the conclusion that there is a sense in which the question whether the object changes when consciousness appears, is an illegitimate question, the reader might be lead to the belief that our position is simply that indicated by Professor Woodbridge[1] in his article Consciousness and Object. He quotes, with approval, the following: "The object figuring in a conscious, perceptual situation, differs from the object out of it, in the possession of consciousness." He also says: "Taking it for granted that the only difference between an object and consciousness of it, is the difference of consciousness. . ."

To be sure, the only difference between an object "out of" and "in" consciousness is just consciousness. In other words, consciousness is not of a nature similar to a screen, which acts upon and changes its objects. If it is ones endeavor to emphasize this non-potent characteristic of consciousness, the statement that the difference between an object "out of" and "in" consciousness is just consciousness, answers very well. But if one does not know

[1]Woodbridge, Consciousness and Object, Phil. Rev., XXI.

what consciousness is, then certainly he would know but little concerning the difference between "out of" and "in" consciousness. He would know just this: that if he ever discovered the nature of consciousness, then his question would be answered.

The trouble with such a statement is that it does not tell us what consciousness is. Or to put it differently, it does not make clear whether we are to accept a thoroughgoing relativity, or fall back in the end, upon a conception of objectivity, like that of McGilvary's.

Let us examine again the nature of consciousness bodies. A comparison of conscious with non-conscious bodies, shows that the environment of a conscious body differs from the environment of a non-conscious body. The respect in which the environment differs in the two cases has to do with the manner in which the two environments act as stimuli. In the case of both non-conscious and conscious bodies, the environments are continually changing. The environment of the conscious bodies, change however, in a different manner, than the environment of non-conscious bodies. For purposes of definiteness, let us illustrate this change, in environment, which is peculiar to conscious bodies. Suppose I am looking at my paper, and then casually look out of my window, and then return again to my paper. This example embodies the peculiar manner in which the environment of conscious bodies changes. Suppose I desired to give a complete description of my looking out of the window, in the

above illustration. That portion of the illustration is not just looking out of the window, but is much more. With the materials given by the illustration, a description of looking out of the window, would have to be given, something after this fashion. While looking at my paper, my paper itself changed. The paper became a stimulus to looking out of the window. The looking out of the window, which followed, also changed. This change is described as above. The looking out of the window, became a stimulus in turn, to look back at my paper. This peculiar change in the stimulus, which occurs at all times, in the environment of conscious bodies, and only in the environment of conscious bodies, is sometimes, described more generally in terms of leading.

In other words, the environment of a conscious body, leads it in this peculiar way, from one stimulus to another stimulus. The stimulus of a conscious body is always in this peculiar flux. It is this peculiar flux in a stimulus that leads the organism from one stimulus to another. As Dewey[1] says: "The perceived subject matter at every point

> in the case of response that <u>has taken</u> effect, with reference to its character, *in* determining <u>further response</u> . It exhibits what the organism <u>has</u> done, but exhibits it with the qualities that attach to it as part of a process of determining what the organism is <u>to do</u>. If at any point we let go of the thread of the organisms' determining its own eventual, total response, through determining the stimulus to

[1]Dewey, <u>Jour. of Phil. & Psy. & Sci. Methods</u>, IX., 659.

that response by a series of partial responses, we are lost."

It is owing to the character of this flux or leading, that the term adjustment is properly applied only to the behavior of conscious organisms. The word "adjustment", it is true, is used quite generally in at least two ways. In the first instance we speak of adjustment on the basis of movement. We say a stone is adjusting itself to the ground, or an organism is adjusting itself to its environment. Adjustment, as used here, really means that the object is changing all the time. When used in this manner the term is so broad, that is likely to be of little service. It is at least of no service in our discussion of adjustments. How then, is the term adjustment used in this discussion? In the first place, adjustment applies only to conscious organisms. In the second place, adjustment is not based upon the movement of the body, but upon the kind of object to which the organism is responding. Since adjustment is determined by the kind of object present to consciousness, it will be well to see what kind of an object means adjustment, and what kind of an object means non-adjustment.

I should say that a sharp distinction can be drawn between the two classes of objects, namely, those standing for adjustment, and those standing for non-adjustment, on the basis of doubt. If an object poss-

esses a doubtful character, then to that extent, there is non-adjustment. If an object does not posess a doubtful character, then the body is said to be adjusted. Whether a body is adjusted or not, at any particular time, then depends upon the question whether the object in consciousness possesses a doubtful character, i. e., whether this leading of the environment meets with conflicting leadings or proceeds smoothly and uninterruptedly. For purposes of clearness, let us take a concrete case. Suppose I look at my table, and see my papers scattered over it, and then I pick up a few of them, and begin to arrange them in a systematic order according to the page numbers. Under those circumstances one would be said to be adjusted. Suppose that after a while I come to a page with no number upon it, and seeing that there is no number upon it, I wonder where it belongs, or what number should have been upon it. The addition of this latter circumstance has made the situation one of non-adjustment. The paper without a number has a doubtful character, and in that respect, I say my body is out of adjustment. My body is out of adjustment to that character of the object, which makes the object a doubtful one. On the other hand, my body is adjusted to the characters of the conscious object, such as the color of the paper, its size, shape, and etc. We may say, then, that if any character of the conscious object is a doubtful one, then the body is not adjusted

to that character of the object and is ad justed to all other characters of the conscious object, which are not doubtful.

We are now in a position to state the nature on consciousness as seen by the writer. The reason why it has been impossible to state the nature of consciousness before, is that our method of approach to the problem, would not allow its statement in full. At the start, body and object were abstracted and each treated separately for purposes of simplicity. After this disjunctive procedure, yielded its results, we took up a conjunctive method of approach, considering both the object and the body together.

Our discussion has brought out these facts: first, that conscious bodies differ from non-conscious bodies in the possession of interested behavior; second, that the stimuli of conscious bodies differ from the stimuli of non-conscious bodies in the possession of this peculiar kind of change, which might be termed a new kind of leading. Consciousness is then the correlation of interested behavior in the body, with this new flux character in the stimuli.

V.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION.

Now that we have stated our conception of consciousness let us take up the main points in these other theories which led to different conclusions. It seems to the writer that the difference in conclusions between the theories presented for criticism and the one advanced by this paper is due mainly to two factors, namely, that these other theories abused the notion of relativity, and that they committed the fallacy of abstraction.

It has been primarily through the misunderstanding of the doctrine of relativity that the theories previously discussed have fallen into error. The misapplication of this same doctrine has led many other philosophical theories into insoluble problems, contradictions, and non-intelligibility. The situation that is presented is an odd one indeed. The facts of ordinary life lead us directly into relativity, and this relativity in turn, has always led to dire results. It is worthy of note that in all instances where error has arisen, the relativity in question was a partial relativity. For that reason, it has been the endeavor and purpose of this paper to use a thorough-going relativity. It seems to the writer that the difficulties to which the doctrine of relativity led, were due entirely to its misapplication. It was played with fast and loose, at one time strictly applied,

and at another time, totally ignored. The efforts of the different theories we have taken up, have shown us at least this; that if an object is treated in an intelligible manner, it is necessary to consider it from standpoint. Any characteristic that is ascribed to an object such as existence, color, shape, spatial or temporal relations, causal relations, has no meaning unless the characteristic ascribed is considered from a standpoint, that is, in relation to an experiencing organism. The application of such a doctrine is what I mean by a thorough-going relativity.

Although one holds to a belief in such a procedure, still one is in grave danger of not using the method at all points. There is one point in particular, that I desire to emphasize, where the danger of misapplication of the doctrine of relativity seems greatest. We have noted at great length, that an object cannot be discussed intelligibly unless we regarded it from some standpoint. We have not said a word specifically about the standpoint. A standpoint may be made an object however, and is subject to the same rules as any other object. This means that a standpoint cannot be discussed intelligibly, except as regarded from another standpoint. The whole nature of a standpoint, including its existence, depends upon another standpoint, in the same manner, as the whole nature of every object depends upon a standpoint.

For the sake of more specific statement, let us consider the question: "what is a standpoint?" Our previous remarks have told us that a standpoint may be classed, first, as an

object. The distinction is made however, between standpoints, and other objects, upon the basis of structure, and behavior. The first qualification for a standpoint, is the possession conscious behavior. This distinction serves the purpose of making the division between standpoints and other objects. But what more may be said concerning a standpoint? Two things may be mentioned in particular: first, a standpoint, consists of a period of time, arbitrarily chosen, and secondly, it is an adjustment considered as completed.

A period of time is such a concrete thing and so often used that probably this characteristic of a standpoint needs no further definition. The other consideration, an adjustment, taken as completed, may be worthy of more special attention. One may very rightly ask when is an adjustment completed, or is a body ever adjusted. A paradoxical statement of the situation would be that a body at any given time is both completely adjusted and incompletely adjusted. This merely means that at any given moment a body is completely adjusted in certain respects, and incompletely adjusted in certain other respects. Because the standpoint is of this nature, we term it complete and continuous; complete meaning that for certain purposes the standpoint is adjusted; continuous meaning, that for certain other purposes, the standpoint is out of adjustment, and for that reason, is continuously attempting adjustment in these respects.

The one point to be noticed in regard to adjustment, is its dependence upon purposes and ends. To ask whether a

standpoint is adjusted or not, without reference to purposes or ends, is a foolish question indeed, because, it is meaningless. The answer to a question whether a standpoint is adjusted or not, then depends upon the end under consideration. If there is end under consideration, then there is no point in talking about adjustment.

The second fallacy that calls for a brief consideration is that of abstraction. Many writers make a division similar to the one made at the beginning of this discussion. They then treat the matter so divided as if it had always been divided. In other words, they do not take into account that they made the division for purely methodological purposes. Theyusually end up by telling us that consciousness is a set of bodily wiggles or else that consciousness is what we have called object. Some go as far as to say that the bodily wiggles and the objects are the same thing seen from two points of view. Now there is no object to dividing a matter up into parts, in fact, it is always necessary, butthere are great objections in dividing a matter up into parts, and then ignorning the fact that an abstraction has been made.

I emphasize this point because it seems to me that many of the perplexities of philosophy have arisen from just such an abstraction. One positive statement then, in regard to consciousness, is that it can be defined only by considering both the body and the object. The error that has been commonly committed by considering the body an object, disjunctively in a definition of consciousness, I will term the

fallacy of spacial abstraction. Our definition thus considered would be then, as has already been stated, a body reacting in a certain typical way to an environment.

Let us turn our attention once more to the division of body and object. We have seen that oftentimes such a division is guilty of the fallacy of spacial abstraction. By the recognition of such a fallacy we have been enabled to make due allowances for it and as a result we have kept our world intact from a spatial standpoint.

Upon further examination of this method of division, namely, consciousness in terms of body, and in terms of object, we find that it not only abstracts spatially, but also temporally. We must likewise take the fact of temporal abstraction into consideration in the formulation of our definition of consciousness. If writers have been guilty of the fallacy of spatial abstraction then they have been doubly, triply, guilty of the fallacy of temporal abstraction. If many of the philosophical perplexities have arisen, due to the fallacy of spatial abstraction, then many of the problems of philosophy have been created by the fallacy of temporal abstraction. Recognizing that the device of body and object as a means of considering consciousness, makes a temporal abstraction as well as a spatial abstraction, we must take into consideration this temporal abstraction into our definition of consciousness. This means that consciousness cannot be defined as a cross-section anymore than it can be defined as a part of its cross-section. The fallacy of

spatial and temporal abstraction, works in this way. By temporal abstraction, things are reduced to cross-section, these cross-sections are treated statically, i. e., the peculiar leading or flux of the environment is omitted.[1] After this reduction spatial abstraction reduces these cross-sections to parts. As a result of such procedure, we do not have a world presented to us, by many philosophical systems, but merely a collection of snapshots.

When the temporal aspect of the situation is taken into account, we find that what we have is not just body, but a body in constant change in regard to structure, behavior and position. In other words, there is no such thing as a constant standpoint. A standpoint is always changing, which means that the world is different at any moment for this changing standpoint. Consciousness then seems to consist in typical bodily changes, correlated with typical changes of the environment.

[1]Perry, Present Philosophical Tendencies, chap. 13. Where consciousness is defined as a kind of static "organization."

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